

TESTIMONY OF RAY BEVIS
LEGISLATIVE COORDINATOR, CONNECTICUT CITIZENS DEFENSE LEAGUE
JUDICIARY COMMITTEE
MARCH 6, 2023

SUPPORTS: H.B. No. 6817 AN ACT CONCERNING AN INDIVIDUAL'S RIGHTS TO OWN, POSSESS OR CARRY A FIREARM.

OPPOSES: H.B. No. 6667 AN ACT ADDRESSING GUN VIOLENCE.

OPPOSES: H.B. No. 6816 AN ACT CONCERNING MICROSTAMPING-ENABLED PISTOLS, RAISING THE AGE TO PURCHASE AMMUNITION AND RESTRICTING THE SALE AND POSSESSION OF BODY ARMOR.

Senator Winfield, Representative Stafstrom, Senator Flexer, Representative Quinn, Senator Kissel, Representative Fishbein, Esteem Members of the Judiciary Committee;

My name is Ray Bevis, Legislative Coordinator for the Connecticut Citizens Defense League, a grassroots organization with over 43,000 members devoted to advocating for the unalienable right of citizens to keep and bear arms.

I am in support of H.B. No. 6817 AN ACT CONCERNING AN INDIVIDUAL'S RIGHTS TO OWN, POSSESS OR CARRY A FIREARM. Unalienable rights- life liberty, and the pursuit of happiness are guaranteed by an individual's right to own, possess, or carry firearms. Section 1 and 2 codifies that our rights *shall* be granted unless any issuing authority finds the applicant does not meet the requirements. It removes the bias of suitability based on the issuing authority's geographical location, political demographics, and leadership agenda. **This will place reassurances that a resident in Bridgeport has to the same opportunity as a resident in Stonington.**

I ask that this committee stand in strong opposition to the Governor's proposed bill 6667 AN ACT ADDRESSING GUN VIOLENCE. Over the years as legal firearm owners have come before this committee, and testified on their concerns- reassurances made by still-sitting legislators that our concerns were not valid, only to find all those concerned are valid and are proposed in the Governor's bill H.B. 6667. Over the last decade, this judiciary Committee has drafted the strictest and most extreme gun control legislation- all in the name of preventing gun violence. Yet here once again with more extreme gun control. This approach does not work- make an actual impact to address violence- *Mayors of the major cities most impacted by violence and criminal firearm activity stand united and have identified bail reform and repeat offenders are the major cause of over 85% of gun violence.* H.B. 6667 is a blatant attack on the lawful residents of Connecticut, that will

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create more laws on the lawful- while **70-90% of the criminal gun charges continue to be nolle or dismissed in Connecticut.**¹

Furthermore, I ask that you oppose H.B. No. 6816 AN ACT CONCERNING MICROSTAMPING-ENABLED PISTOLS, RAISING THE AGE TO PURCHASE AMMUNITION AND RESTRICTING THE SALE AND POSSESSION OF BODY ARMOR. Of all the states, Connecticut already has the toughest law on body armor. Now possession of it will be illegal. The probability of an armed criminal wearing body armor getting into an altercation with police is remarkably insignificant. Claiming to be proposing sensible bills to address gun violence- now hearing a bill that removes personal protective equipment that prevents firearm injuries? Don't residents of Connecticut deserve the right to life liberty, and the pursuit of happiness? **If body armor is good enough to protect our law enforcement, then it is good enough to protect the lives that are most impacted by violence in our state.**

I thank you for your consideration OPPOSING H.B. No. 6667, H.B. No. 6816, and SUPPORTING H.B. No. 6817.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ray W. Bevis', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Ray Bevis

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¹ <https://www.cga.ct.gov/2022/rpt/pdf/2022-R-0061.pdf>